In the Specification:

Please amend the specification by adding the following after the paragraph ending at page 5, line 4:

-- Still another embodiment of the present invention includes adjusting the pH of the tooth surface to a pH between 7.0 and 10.0 either prior to or during the tooth bleaching process. The present inventive method can be practiced by (1) raising the tooth surface pH to between 7.0 and 10.0 prior to and during contact with a peroxide-containing or peroxide-releasing tooth bleaching composition or (2) employing a tooth bleaching composition which will result in a tooth surface pH of between 7.0 and 10.0 during contact with said tooth. --

Please amend the paragraph beginning at page 5, line 20, to the following:

-- An important aspect of the present invention is the finding that the efficiency of the bleaching reaction in a tooth using a chemical tooth-bleaching agent such as a peroxide-containing or peroxide-releasing tooth bleaching composition, for example hydrogen peroxide can be significantly enhanced at a pH greater than 5.5, more particularly a pH in the range of 6-10, for example in a range of pH of 7-10, more particularly between 8.0 and 9.5, alternatively between pH of 7.5 and 9.0, providing that the pH is maintained at a substantially constant range throughout the tooth-bleaching process and a calcium chelating agent is included in the composition to prevent precipitation of calcium ions. (Table 1-4) --

Please amend the specification by adding the following after the paragraph ending at page 7, line 20:

-- The present inventive method can alternatively be practiced by raising the tooth surface pH to between 7.0 and 10.0 prior to contact with a peroxide-containing or peroxide-releasing tooth bleaching composition. An alkalizing agent, such as sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, ammonium carbonate, and the like, is utilized as a rinse, paste or gel which is applied to the tooth surface prior to contact with the peroxide-containing or peroxide-releasing tooth bleaching composition. It is preferred to employ a composition with buffering capability, in order that the tooth surface pH can be maintained between 7.0 and 10.0 during the entirety of the tooth bleaching process. --

Please amend the specification by adding the following after the paragraph ending at page 15, line 18:

-- **Example 6: A Two-Component Formulation in which an Alkalizing Agent Is First Applied to the Tooth Surface Followed by a Tooth Bleaching Composition.**

The aqueous alkalizing agent of this example was designed to be applied to the tooth surface prior to the application of the tooth bleaching composition of this example. The pH of the aqueous alkalizing agent was 8.8 at 25°C.

Table 6

Alkalizing Agent	
Ingredient	**Weight Percent**
Deionized Water	87.20
SD Alcohol 38B	5.00
Potassium Phosphate Dibasic	5.00
Poloxamer 407	2.50
Flavor	0.30
Total	100

Table 7

Tooth Bleaching Composition	
Ingredient	**Weight Percent**
Distilled Water	79.86
Carbopol 974P	2.00
Hydrogen Peroxide 35% (Super D/FMC Corp.)	17.14
Triethanolamine 99%	1.00
Total	100

The above tooth bleaching agent was prepared by dispersing the Carbopol 974P in the distilled water, reserving enough water to dissolve the triethanolamine for the final neutralization step. The dispersion was heated, with agitation, to 75°C and allowed to cool, whereupon the hydrogen peroxide was added slowly while mixing. The triethanolamine was added (as a 20% solution) slowly to effect neutralization of the Carbopol 974P and achieve the final composition pH of 4.5. All equipment contact parts were constructed of Kynar-coated 316 Stainless Steel to prevent leaching of contaminant metals into solution.

Example 7: A Stable Tooth Bleaching Composition Suitable for Use in a Single Component System.

The following preferred single component stabilized hydrogen peroxide gel has a pH of 8.0:

Table 8

Ingredient	Weight Percent
Distilled Water	86.41
Stabilizer solution*	0.60
Carbopol 974P (BF Goodrich)	2.50
Hydrogen Peroxide 35% (PeroxyClean, FMC Corp.	10.30
Sodium Hydroxide Monohydrate (EM Suprapur Grade)	0.19
TOTAL	100.00

* the stabilizer solution comprises the following:

DeQuest 2010 (Monsanto)	24,000 ppm
Sodium Stannate Trihydrate (Goldschmidt)	35,000 ppm
Distilled water	qs to 100%

B5 cont.

The above example was prepared by dissolving the stabilizer solution in the distilled water (reserving enough water to dissolve the sodium hydroxide for the final neutralization step), followed by dispersion of the Carbopol 974P in the distilled water/stabilizer solution. This dispersion was heated, with agitation, to 75°C and allowed to cool, whereupon the hydrogen peroxide was added slowly while mixing. The sodium hydroxide was added (as a 50% solution) slowly to effect neutralization of the Carbopol 974P and achieve the final composition pH of 8.0. All equipment contact parts were constructed of Kynar-coated 316 Stainless Steel to prevent leaching of contaminant metals into solution. --

In the Claims:

Please amend the following claim:

B6

25. (Amended) The method of claim [23] 24 wherein the alkalizing agent is selected from the group consisting of sodium hydroxide, sodium carbonate, and ammonium carbonate.